



Of all the above measures, only the percent of arts and design workers had a significant impact on the amount of tourist expenditures. When the percent of arts and design workers was high, tourist expenditures were high (Fig. 1). Higher percentages of arts and design workers were also associated with increased spending by tourists over the decade. Increased tourist spending was seen in retirement destinations as well. None of the other measures considered as potential influences had a significant effect on tourist expenditures.

2. Arts and design workers attract current and potential residents

North Carolina counties with higher proportions of workers in arts-related occupations⁴ were more attractive to current and incoming residents—even after other county characteristics were taken into account that had been significant in national research. RTS found that, during the period 1990 to 2000, counties where the rate of growth in establishments was higher and where the proportion of workers who were artists was higher were more likely to retain current residents and attract new ones⁵. A high proportion of artists and growth in the number of establishments were the only significant positive influences on the net migration rate in the final model.

⁴ Although employment in arts and design businesses is the best measurement of clustering, ES-202 industry data was not available for the beginning of the period being examined for impact (1990-2000). Since arts and design occupation and industry data is highly correlated in North Carolina, 1990 arts and design occupations were used in all regression models.

⁵ The measure of change used was the domestic net migration rate, which subtracts the number of people moving out of a county from the number of people moving in (from within the U.S.), and calculates that number as a proportion of the county's population at the beginning of the period (1990-2000).